

Vermont Workforce Development Council  
Executive Committee

Meeting notes  
4/9/07

1) Update on Legislation and next steps -

Chip reviewed the language in the latest version of h.433, with particular attention to the language about a workforce Champion (the Commissioner of Labor) and the Champion Committee of the WDC. He pointed out that this is an effort to strike a balance between the capability of the WDC as a public forum where a consensus can be developed and the advantages of placing clear responsibility and accountability for results on a single person. There was discussion of the potential ambiguity of this arrangement and the necessity for the Champion and Champion Committee to work closely together and come to agreement on the major strategies. It was pointed out that the system we have spreads responsibility and funding for workforce development across so many independent agencies and institutions that unless a consensus can be developed little can be accomplished. This new structure may be able to develop that consensus. Under the most recent language, the Champion Committee would be a subcommittee of the WDC and have 8 members, four business members and a higher education member selected by the Governor from the Council membership, the Secy. of Human Services, and the Commissioners of Education and Economic Development with the Commissioner of Labor as Chair. The Committee is given the responsibility to establish broad goals for the workforce development system and requires the key agencies and institutions, as well as any others who wish to do so, to report regularly on their contributions to achieving these goals. In turn, the Committee is then required to report to the Legislature and Governor on progress toward the goals and the effectiveness of each agency's efforts.

The bill also includes creation of a one-time study commission comprised entirely of employers to examine long term solutions to funding the States workforce system, including looking at methods in

other states and countries and reporting back in December of '07.

2) Full Council conference call:

Plans for the conference call were finalized with Frank doing an introduction and welcome, Chip doing an overview of the bill and structure of the proposed committees, and Pat covering the funding aspects. The call was held as scheduled the next day and the members were satisfied with the bill as described. Several employers spoke to the need for skilled workers and the competitive salaries being offered.

3) Plan for next full Council meeting, June:

It was agreed to look for a date in late May for a full Council meeting. The afternoon of June 12 was subsequently agreed upon. The agenda would include Mike Quinn's offer to do a presentation on the State's economic development plan. Other items would include inviting the Governor as a speaker, and inviting key Legislators to speak on a panel about what they hope to see as the law is implemented. Workgroups could then be formed to address key aspects of the bill such as policies for training program implementation, establishing the broad goals for the system, and other aspects of the new law. Chip will look for a place to hold the meeting

4) Update on WIRED Grant applications:

Pat and Mike provided copies and brief overviews of the State's two WIRED Grant applications. These are the U2U, a joint NH and VT application and the Northern New England Talent development Network which is a joint NH, VT, and ME application. By design, WIRED grant applications lay out broad strategies. Education and training organizations within each State would be able to participate in the implementation stage if these projects are selected. The members expressed their gratitude to Greg Voorhies for his efforts in coordinating these multi-state efforts and putting the drafts together.